

## The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature

### General Session of the Commission, Budapest, 16–23 August 1996

Present: Prof A. Minelli (President), Commissioners Bock, Bouchet, Dupuis, Heppell, Kraus, Lehtinen, Nielsen, Ride and (from 18 August) Starobogatov. Dr Tubbs (Executive Secretary) and Mrs A. Gentry were present from the Secretariat.

1. Apologies for absence had been received from Commissioners Bayer, Cocks, Cogger, Corliss, Hahn, Halvorsen, Kabata, Mahnert, Martins de Souza, Nye, Savage, Schuster, Štys and Trjapitzin.

2. The Minutes of the previous General Session of the Commission (Amsterdam, September 1991; BZN 48: 286–292) were accepted and signed.

3. The Commission noted and accepted the Executive Secretary's Report to IUBS covering the years 1991–1994.

#### 4. *Developments since the previous General Session*

(a) *Changes in membership.* Two Commissioners (Prof L.B. Holthuis and Prof A. Willink) had retired on reaching the age limit, and two others (Dr F.C. Thompson and Dr S.-I. Uéno) had resigned. The tenure of six members had been due for completion at the 1994 IUBS General Assembly, but no Session of the Commission had been held then and they had agreed to serve until the close of the current Session; these were Commissioners Bayer, Corliss, Hahn, Halvorsen, Starobogatov and Trjapitzin. Members present wished to thank all those who had left, or were leaving, for their services to nomenclature and to the Commission.

(b) *Officers of the Commission.* Prof Dr O. Kraus had completed his six-year term as President, and Prof A. Minelli had been elected to succeed him with effect from 17 November 1995. Dr H.G. Cogger had been elected as Vice-President in December 1991.

(c) *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature.* The Executive Secretary reported that the number of applications for Commission rulings and Opinions which had been published remained fairly constant, despite the pressure on the Secretariat caused by work on the proposed new edition of the Code. In the past few years there had been some decrease in the number of subscriptions to the *Bulletin*; although this had been the experience of very many journals it was a matter of concern, since nearly half the income for the support of the Commission's work came from sale of publications, mainly subscriptions to the *Bulletin*.

(d) *Centenary History.* A volume entitled *Towards Stability in the Names of Animals*, written mainly by the late Richard Melville (Commission Secretary from 1968 to 1985), had been published in August 1995 to mark the Commission's centenary. It reviews the contributions of some of those, from Linnaeus onwards, who have attempted to provide a system ensuring that each animal taxon has a unique name which is to be changed only to reflect advances in taxonomic understanding.

(e) *Financial position.* It was reported that the future financial position of the International Trust for Zoological Nomenclature (which exists solely to support the

Commission's work) is very uncertain, and that it will deteriorate unless adequate continuous support is forthcoming from international sources. At present various bodies and individuals give generous and much appreciated help, but except in the very short term this will not suffice to prevent a potentially critical situation. In recent years the annual deficit has been about £5000, despite economies which limit the Commission's efficiency, and the effect of this is cumulative. It was agreed that efforts should be made to ensure long-term support; IUBS might be involved in suitable approaches.

#### 5. *Procedure for election of a Vice-President*

It was agreed, under Bylaw 12b (BZN 34: 178), that Commissioners Bouchet and Lehtinen would augment the Council to nominate two candidates for election as Vice-President following the completion of Dr Cogger's tenure in December 1997.

#### 6. *Proposed amendments to the Constitution*

Some proposed amendments to the Constitution had been agreed by the Council and had been published in 1995 (BZN 52: 6–10). The Commission noted that the major ones would be discussed on 19 August at a Session of the Section on Zoological Nomenclature (see BZN 53: 239–244 for an account of this), and that amendments would subsequently be approved, or otherwise, in a postal vote in the same way as changes to the Code. If approved, and ratified by IUBS, they would be incorporated into the new edition of the Code.

Some minor changes in the wording of the proposed amendments were agreed.

#### 7. *Election of new members of the Commission*

As recorded in para. 4(a) above, ten members had already left the Commission or were about to do so. The present International Congress of Systematic and Evolutionary Biology provided a venue for participation by zoologists in elections to the Commission, and it was agreed that it would be appropriate to fill seven vacancies by a ballot; other vacancies could be filled in subsequent by-elections.

The Commission reviewed the 33 nominations which had been received, having regard to the qualities of the nominees and, in conjunction with the present membership of the Commission, their taxonomic fields of expertise and their geographical locations. Particulars of all the nominees had been circulated to the Commission. It was agreed to present to the Section of Zoological Nomenclature (i.e. all those present at the Congress or the Workshop who considered themselves to be zoologists) a list of 14 candidates. Five candidates were particularly recommended to the Section because their election would avoid deficiencies which would otherwise exist in the scope of the Commission's membership.

The subsequent ballot of the Section is reported below (BZN 53: 244).

#### 8. *New (Fourth) Edition of the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature*

As agreed at the previous meeting of the Commission (BZN 48: 291), a Discussion Draft had been prepared (following a meeting of the Editorial Committee in Hamburg in October 1993) and, starting in May 1995, had been widely distributed throughout the world. Very many comments had been received, by post and electronically (see BZN 53: 145–146 and 240, para. 5); all were circulated to the Editorial Committee and some had been published in the *Bulletin* (BZN 52: 228–233, 294–302; 53: 6–17, 80–88).

After assessment of the responses to the Discussion Draft, the Committee had met in Vicenza (Italy) in June 1996 and had reviewed every Article in the Code in the light of the comments by taxonomists and other users of zoological names. The President had circulated a revised draft to the Commission in July; a Report by the Editorial Committee was also circulated.

Guided by the Chairman of the Committee (Prof Ride), members of the Commission present in Budapest discussed the proposed new edition of the Code on 17–18 August, and, following the Workshop on 19 August, again on 22–23 August. By invitation of the President, Dr I.M. Kerzhner (Russia), Dr C.W. Sabrosky (U.S.A.) and Dr F.C. Thompson (U.S.A.) were present for the Commission's discussions of the Code on 18 August and following days, and Prof D.J. Brothers (South Africa) was present on 22 August.

The Commission considered every Article in the proposed Code, although attention was directed primarily at major changes from the current (Third) edition and at points where the Editorial Committee, at their meeting in Vicenza, had recommended significant modifications to the Discussion Draft. Major conclusions reached in discussions on 17–18 August and at the Workshop (Section meeting) on 19 August are summarised in BZN 53: 242–243.

Further points agreed by the Commission included the following:

(i) a work published after 1998 other than by printing on paper (e.g. on laser disk) would only be available if containing a statement that it was intended for permanent record and that copies printed on paper had been deposited in at least ten named libraries (Art. 8);

(ii) electronic sources (e.g. World Wide Web) from which copies could be obtained on demand would not constitute published work (Art. 9);

(iii) a family-group name published in the period 1931–1960 without description of the taxon would only be available if it had been adopted before 1999 (Art. 13);

(iv) after 1998 the distribution of separates of works published in a serial would not advance the date of publication (Art. 21);

(v) cases of homonymy in existing family-group names resulting from similar names of type genera were to be referred to the Commission (Art. 55);

(vi) while overlooked type species fixations were to be accepted (unless instability was caused, in which case reference to the Commission was necessary), an author finding that the type species of a genus had been misidentified would be able, under specified conditions, to fix as type species either the misidentified nominal species or the taxonomic species actually involved (Art. 70);

(vii) lectotype designations made before 1999 were only to be taken as valid if a particular syntype was unambiguously selected, and the conditions for designations after 1998 were clarified (Art. 74);

(viii) rediscovered original type material would automatically displace a neotype as the name-bearing type (Art. 75).

It was agreed that the Editorial Committee should revise the Glossary, which was an integral part of the Code, to reflect any necessary changes.

The new edition of the Code would initially be published in English and French, with both texts having equal authority (Article 86). The Société Française de Systématique had made a financial contribution (BZN 52: 292) and the Commission

noted this with gratitude. Dr Bouchet offered to co-ordinate production of the French text, and this was accepted.

It was agreed that the Commission could authorise the publication of the Code in any other languages; if it did so, those official texts would have the same authority as those in English and French (Article 87).

The President proposed that all members of the Commission should be asked in a postal vote to approve the main principles of the Code as had been accepted by the meetings in Budapest. If such approval is given, final editorial corrections (including those necessary to harmonise the English and French texts) would be made. In accordance with the Constitution, the Commission would then be asked, in a second postal vote, to approve publication of the new edition of the Code.

The Officers of IUBS had agreed (see also BZN 53: 240) that copies of the final text of the proposed Code would be circulated to members of the IUBS Executive after the final vote by the Commission, together with a request that the text be ratified by them as the international body in authority over the Commission.

Subject to approval by the Commission's final vote and ratification by IUBS, it was intended that the Fourth Edition of the Code would be published in 1997 and that its provisions would come into effect on 1 January 1999.

The Commission accepted the procedure proposed by the President.

#### 9. Proposed 'International Code of Bionomenclature'

As previously reported (BZN 53: 148), the International Unions of Biological Sciences and Microbiological Societies (IUBS and IUMS) were proposing that a unified *International Code of Bionomenclature*, or 'BioCode', might regulate the form and usage of scientific names for all biological taxa which were first published after some future date; names published before that date would be regulated by the relevant existing Codes. [A draft of the *BioCode* has been published in the *Bulletin* (BZN 53: 148-166)].

The President proposed, and it was agreed, that the Commission should continue to cooperate with this project, but that a commitment to endorse a *BioCode* should not be made at present.

#### 10. Possible future International Congresses of Zoology

The President reported a proposal (see BZN 53: 245-246) from Prof F.D. Por (Jerusalem) and Prof R.M. Polymeni (Athens) that International Congresses of Zoology should be revived; the last full Congress had been held in Washington in 1963, although in 1972 there had been a Congress in Monaco which was largely devoted to administrative winding-up purposes.

The Commission had a discussion of this suggestion, based on correspondence from Prof Por and a leaflet made available in Budapest. It was agreed to respond to Profs Por and Polymeni that the Commission had sympathy with the principle of their proposal to establish a new International Congress of Zoology to foster the status of Zoology as a unified field of science, and to serve as a forum for exchanges of views in diverse areas at present covered by specialised meetings. It was also agreed to communicate to Profs Por and Polymeni the Commission's view that the viability of such a Congress (and its successors) would critically depend on the scientific programme, and on the support it achieved.

If such a Congress were to be held, and it was affiliated with IUBS, the Commission would decide whether to hold a meeting and a Session of the Section of Zoological Nomenclature in conjunction with it. The proposal to initiate a future Congress did not affect the delegation to IUBS of authority over the Commission which had been made by the 1972 Congress.

#### 11. *Conclusion*

In closing the meeting of the Commission, Prof Minelli said that agreement on the principles to be incorporated into the new edition of the Code was a notable achievement. He thanked Commissioners and other participants in the discussions on the Code for their contributions to this.